

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
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R 111454Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1270
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
RUDTCGXAMEMBASSY LONDON 753
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PLO, SY
SUBJECT: PLO OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON FORTHCOMING PLO CONFERENCES

1. SUMMARY: PNC LEADER KHALID FAHUM, ON EVE OF JANUARY
11 PLO CNETRAL COUNCIL MEETING IN DAMASCUS, AGAIN PREDICTED
LARGE EXPANSION OF PNC. HE CALLED FOR INCREASED PLO COOPERA-
TION WITH SYRIA AND EGYPT AND REITERATED PLO OBJECTIONS TO
ATTENDING GENEVA MEPC ON BASIS UNSC RES. 242. FAHUM EXPRESSED
"SURPRISE" THAT THERE WERE SO MANY RUMORS ABOUT FORMATION
PALESTINIAN PROVISIONAL GOVT WHICH HE MIGHT HEAD BUT DID
NOT DENY THAT SUCH A DECISION MIGHT OCCUR AT FEBRUARY PNC
SESSION. END SUMMARY.
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2. ON EVE JAN. 11 MEETING IN DAMASCUS OF PLO CENTRAL
COUNCIL, PNC PRESIDENT KHALID FAHUM GAVE HIS VIEWS ON
CURRENT TOPICS TO AL-BAATH. INTERVIEW OPENS WITH DES-
CRIPTION OF INTENSE ACTIVITY IN FAHUM'S OFFICES, WITH
FAHUM, HIMSELF, BEING FREQUENTLY INTERRUPTED BY TELEPHONE
CALLS FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING CANDIDACIES

TO PNC.

3. FORMATION OF PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

FAHUM ASSERTED THAT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE HAD DECIDED

"SO FAR" ON ADDING 120 ADDITIONAL MEMBERS TO PNC. HE CLAIMED FIGURE COULD BE FURTHER INCREASED "IN LIGHT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS." HE INDICATED FINAL NUMBER WOULD REACH 300-315 MEMBERS AND WOULD BE DRAWN FROM COUNTRIES WITH PALESTINIAN CONCENTRATIONS, INCLUDING OCCUPIED TERRITORIES ARAB STATES, CANADA, AND LATIN AMERICA (EIGHT MEMBERS FROM LAST TWO REGIONS). NOTED NAMES OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES MAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. FAHUM STRESSED PREPARATORY COMMITTEE HAD TAKEN STEPS TO ENSURE ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION FROM FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS, SIGNIFYING PNC DEPENDENCE ON ITS "BASIC FOUNDATION, ARMED STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION OF PALESTINE." HE ALSO PLEDGED THAT PALESTINIAN POPULAR AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WOULD RECEIVE GOOD REPRESENTATION. COMMENT: SEVERAL WELL-CONNECTED LOCAL SOURCES HAVE TOLD US TO EXPECT INCREASE OF 70-80 MEMBERS IN PNC AS MORE IN LINE WITH RAFAT'S WISHES. ONE SOURCE CLAIMED THAT AT PNC SESSION IN DECEMBER, ARAFAT, AFTER LISTENING TO FAHUM AND HIS SUPPORTERS ARGUE FOR LARGE EXPANSION OF PNC, SARCASTICALLY REMINDED THEM PLO WAS REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING ONLY THREE MILLION PALESTINIANS AND NOT "BRITISH PARLIAMENT." IT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APPEARS TO US THAT FAHUM, DESPITE PROFESSIONS OF SECURING ADEQUATE FEDAYEEN REPRESENTATION, STILL INTENT UPON DILUTING FEDAYEEN STRENGTH IN PROCESS OF BROADENING PNC BASE.

4. GENEVA MEPC.

FAHUM REITERATED PLO OPPOSITION TO ATTENDING CONFERENCE ON BASIS RESOLUTION 242. HE PREDICTED MEPC

WOULD FAIL TO CONVENE IN FIRST HALF OF YEAR DUE TO "ZIONIST ARROGANCE."

5. PLO RELATION WITH ARAB STATES.

FAHUM CALLED FOR GREATER SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN-PALESTINIAN COOPERATION AS ONLY MEANS TO PUT AN END TO ISRAELI "ARROGANCE" AND FORCE ISRAELI PULLBACK FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND RECOGNITION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS.

6. FORMATION QPALESTINIAN STATE AND PROVISIONAL GOVT.

FAHUM NOTED THAT PNC IN ITS TEN-POINT PROGRAM PROVIDED FOR PALESTINIANS ESTABLISHING NATIONAL AUTHORITY OMR ANY "LIBERATED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY." HE NOTED RUMOR CIRCULATING ABOUT FORMATION FO PROVISIONAL GOVT AND EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT SUCH RUMORS HAD "REACH POINT OF CLAIMING TO NOMINATE ME AS HEAD" OF SUCH A GOVERNMENT. ADMITTING THAT PROPOSAL TO FORM GOVT-IN-EXILE HAD BEEN NLOATED IN 1972, HE DECLARED IT HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED OFFICIALLY AT ANY PLO BODIES AND TERMED STATEMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT "MERE SPECULATION AND RUMOR."

7. COMMENT: FAHUM APPEARED TO TONE DOWN POSITIONS EXPRESSED IN EARLIER STATEMENTS WIHTOU ABANDONING ANY OF THEM. FAHUM'S CLOSE IDENTIFICATION WITHSYRIANS AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SEEMING WILLINGNESS TO PUT HIMSELF FORWARD AS ALTERNATIVE TO ARAFAT HAS IRRITATED NUMBER OF HIS COLLEAGUES. IT APPEARS HE TRYING TO MAKE SOME OF HIS MANEUVERS MORE PALATABLE BY MAKING APPROPRIATE OBESANCE TOWARD FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS AND DOWNPLAYING HIS PERSONAL AMBITIONS. IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT AT THIS POINT NEITHER FAHUM NOR ANYONE ELSE HAS PRECISE IDEA OF EVENTUAL MEMBERSHIP OF PNC. FREE-FOR-ALL WHICH AL-BAATH CORRESPONDENT DESCRIBED TAKING PLACE AT PLO OFFICES IN DAMASCUS SUGGESTS ALL SORTS OF PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS AND CANDIDATES ARE POLITICKING INTENSELY TO BE INCLUDED. MURPHY

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